European airlines agree to drop misleading climate claims

BRUSSELS: European airlines, including Lufthansa, Air France, and KLM, have agreed to stop making misleading environmental claims about offsetting the carbon emissions from air travel, the European Commission said on Friday.

The pledge from 21 carriers will oblige them to clarify that the emissions of a specific flight cannot be "neutralised, offset, or directly reduced" by contributing to climate protection projects or alternative fuels — claims the EU, saying it amount to greenwashing.

"To avoid misleading consumers, airlines must refrain from using vague environmental language and ensure that any claims about future environmental performance are substantiated," the commission said in a statement.

The announcement made in the run-up to next week's COP30 UN climate summit in Brazil stems from a consultation between airlines, the EU executive, and consumer protection groups.

Airlines also pledged to present carbon emission calculations clearly and transparently, and provide robust scientific evidence when claiming environmental improvements.

The carriers concerned are Air Baltic, Air Dolomiti, Air France, Austrian Airlines, Brussels Airlines, Eurowings, EasyJet, Finnair, KLM, Lufthansa, Luxair, Norwegian, Ryanair, SAS, SWISS, TAP, Transavia France, Transavia CV, Volotea, Vueling, and Wizz Air.

The commitments follow a formal complaint lodged with the European Commission in June 2023 by consumer groups, which accused the aviation sector of misleading advertising practices.

The industry has begun to shift its messaging after a series of legal setbacks.

In March 2024, a Dutch court ruled against KLM in a greenwashing case, saying the airline misled consumers with vague claims about the sustainability of its flights.

A year later, a German court barred Lufthansa from advertising carbon offsetting in a way deemed deceptive.

Air France no longer offers carbon offsets for flights. Instead, it suggests passengers contribute to the purchase of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).

"There is room to change" in the way airlines communicate, said Diane Vitry, who heads up the aviation section of the NGO Transport & Environment.

Aviation accounts for around three percent of global carbon emissions, but its overall contribution to climate change is higher because of the release of other greenhouse gases and condensation trails at high altitudes.—AFP

India tests digital systems for biggest census

NEW DELHI: India is trialling mobile software systems as it prepares to conduct the world's largest — and first fully digital — population census in 2027.

The upcoming census will be the country's first since 2011 and will, for the first time since independence, register people's castes — a politically sensitive exercise last undertaken in 1931 under British rule.

A 20-day trial begins November 10 in selected areas of the southern state of Karnataka.

It will test a mobile app-based data collection system and self-enumeration options designed to replace traditional paper-based methods.

"The objective is to assess the functioning and efficiency of the digital application across diverse areas — from urban regions to those with limited mobile network connectivity," the Ministry of Home Affairs said in a statement.

"This trial marks a significant step towards India's first-ever fully digital census, replacing traditional paper-based schedules." The exercise presents an immense logistical challenge — voting in the 2024 general elections was electronic, and polling took place in seven phases over six weeks.

But a census must be conducted all at one time to fix a single snapshot of the population — and avoid any double-counting.

The main count is scheduled to take place on March 1, 2027.

But in high-altitude Himalayan regions — including Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Ladakh, and the disputed territory of Arunachal Pradesh — the census will begin earlier on October 1, 2026, before snowfall begins.

Caste remains a powerful determinant of social status in India, shaping access to resources, education, and opportunity.

More than two-thirds of India's 1.4 billion people are believed to belong to historically disadvantaged communities, long subject to systemic discrimination.

The millennia-old social hierarchy divides Hindus by function and social standing.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party has in the past opposed the idea of enumerating people by caste, arguing it would deepen social divisions, but backed the new survey in May.

Proponents say detailed demographic information is crucial for targeted social justice programmes, including earmarking university seats and government jobs for socially disadvantaged communities.

Successive governments have avoided updating caste data, citing administrative complexity and fears of social unrest.

A caste survey conducted alongside the 2011 census was never released.—AFP

Tehran may face evacuation due to drought: president

TEHRAN: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian warned in a speech on Friday that the capital Tehran may need evacuating because of water shortages if it doesn't rain before the end of the year.

"If it doesn't rain, we'll have to start rationing water in Tehran between late November and early December," Pezeshkian said in a speech broadcast on state TV.

"Even if we do ration it and it still doesn't rain by then, we'll run out of water, we'll have to evacuate Tehran."

Iran has been affected by dwindling rainfall, but the sprawling megacity of more than 10 million people is particularly vulnerable.

On Sunday, the director of the regional water company warned in state media that there was just two weeks' worth of water left in the main reservoir serving Tehran.

Meanwhile, Tasnim News Agency reported that the country's precipitation level this year had reached just 152 millimetres, a 40 per cent decline compared to the 57-year average.

The agency quoted Mohammad Reza Kavianpour, head of the Water Research Institute, as saying that several provinces "experienced a 50 to 80 per cent decline in precipitation". He added that storage in the capital's dams in the new water year, which began in late September, was around 250 million cubic metres, roughly half of the 490 million cubic metres recorded in 2023-24.

"We must prepare ourselves for a critical situation," he said.

Water levels in the reservoirs supplying the capital have fallen to their lowest in decades, according to Mohsen Ardakani, director general of the provincial water company covering Tehran.

"In the last six months, the population has saved 10 per cent of its water consumption," Ardakani said on state TV on Wednesday.

"If this figure reaches 20 per cent, we will be able to ensure a stable water situation for the next one to two months when the rains start again," he added.

Winter months in Tehran usually bring rainfall and often snow.

A sharp decline in rainfall and reduced dam inflow have deepened the crisis, as Iran faces one of its worst droughts in decades.—AFP

Colombia fears US wants EU summit to fail

BOGOT: A summit of European and Latin American nations on Sunday risks being overshadowed by no-shows and disputes, as host Colombia accused the United States of pressuring countries to skip the event.

Amid a major political spat between Bogota and Washington, only about 12 of the 60 invited leaders are expected to attend a two-day EU-Latin American and Caribbean states summit in Santa Marta from Sunday.

Host President Gustavo Petro has suggested the poor turnout is the fault of Donald Trump's administration.

"Foreign powers opposed to peace in the Americas want this summit to fail," he said in a thinly veiled social media post days before the meeting.

Petro has frequently clashed with Trump over US strikes on alleged drug boats — calling them "extrajudicial executions" — and forced deportations of Latino migrants from the United States.

The US president has not taken the criticism well.

He has banned Petro from visiting the United States, imposed sanctions on the Colombian president and his family, and cut US aid to Colombia worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

The president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, cancelled her participation at the last minute due to poor turnout, a European official said.—AFP

Istanbul talks break down, but truce holds

Continued from Page 1

in Doha, ended with only a general agreement to develop a mechanism for verifying compliance and a decision to continue talks.

The latest round was aimed at finalising the modalities of that verification and monitoring mechanism.

Afghan negotiators, meanwhile, claimed on Friday that their own proposals were "logical and easily achievable" for Pakistan but described Islamabad's demands as "unrealistic and aggressive", suggesting they might serve as a pretext to create further complications.

According to a source familiar with the discussions, the Afghan side conveyed that "it is up to Pakistan's own calculations to deal with the situation".

A source in Istanbul described the late-evening atmosphere at Istanbul's Conrad Hotel, where the talks were held, as "not positive".

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar, who had declared a similar deadlock at the previous round before mediators salvaged a statement, said the "onus lies on Afghanistan to fulfil its long-standing international, regional and bilateral pledges regarding control of terrorism — in which so far they have failed".

Repeating the Foreign Office spokesman's earlier warning about Islamabad's response in case of failure of the talks, Mr Tarar said that Pakistan would continue to exercise all options necessary to safeguard the security of its people and its sovereignty.

Earlier, Mr Andrabi said, "All I can say is that, in any eventuality, we will protect the lives of our people and make sure that our civilians, our military forces and our law enforcement agencies on the border are not killed by attacks emanating from Afghanistan."

Pakistan rejects claims of fresh nuclear tests

Continued from Page 1

control structure, comprehensive export controls, and an impeccable record of compliance with the global non-proliferation regime".

India's MEA spokesperson, Randhir Jaiswal, alleged that Pakistan was carrying out "clandestine and illegal nuclear activities". India has also taken "note of President Trump's comment about Pakistan's nuclear testing," he said.

'Deeply concerning'

But Mr Andrabi dismissed the Indian statement, saying, "India is clearly distorting facts and misrepresenting the remarks of US President Donald Trump. The US side has already clarified its position to the media regarding the statements by the president."

"[The] allegations of 'clandestine or illegal nuclear activities' are baseless, malicious, and part of India's disinformation campaign aimed at diverting attention from its own irresponsible conduct," Mr Andrabi added.

The FO spokesman said India's record on nuclear safety and security remained "deeply concerning".

"Over the past several decades, numerous incidents involving the theft and illicit trafficking of sensitive nuclear material and other radioactive substances have exposed serious deficiencies in India's ability to safeguard its facilities," Mr Andrabi said.

"As recently as last year, radioactive equipment from the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, along with the highly radioactive substance Californium — valued at over $100 million — was found on sale in India." He noted that such recurring incidents "point to the existence of a thriving nuclear black market for sensitive and dual-use materials in India".

"The international community must take serious note of these alarming gaps, which pose a grave threat to both regional and global security."—Baqir Sajjad Syed

Better Vision, Better Future

OGDC's Free Eye Camps

Schedule for Free Eye Camps 2025-26 Across Pakistan

Dates	Locations	Province	Dates	Locations	Province
10-11-2025 to 12-11-2025	Mahmood Shah Bukhari Football Ground Chanesar Goth Karachi	SINDH	23-12-2025 to 25-12-2025	Type-D Hospital, Sabirabad, District Karak	KPK
08-12-2025 to 10-12-2025	OGDC's Sinjhoro Gas Field, District Sanghar	SINDH	27-12-2025 to 29-12-2025	Rural Health Center (RHC) Shakardara, District Kohat	KPK
12-12-2025 to 14-12-2025	OGDC's Bobi Oil Complex, BOC, District Sanghar	SINDH	27-01-2026 to 29-01-2026	Rural Health Centre (RHC) Ballitang, Gumbat, District Kohat	KPK
18-12-2025 to 20-12-2025	OGDC's Kunnar Oil Field, District Hyderabad	SINDH	03-02-2026 to 05-02-2026	District Headquarter (DHQ) Hospital, District Karak,	KPK
22-12-2025 to 24-12-2025	OGDC's Pasakhi Oil Field, Tando Jam, District Hyderabad	SINDH	16-12-2025 to 18-12-2025	Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) Hospital , Tehsil Jand, District Attock	PUNJAB
29-12-2025 to 31-12-2025	OGDC's Tando Alam Oil Complex (TOC), District Hyderabad	SINDH	01-01-2026 to 03-01-2026	Rural Health Centre (RHC) Muradabad, District Muzaffargarh	PUNJAB
05-01-2026 to 07-01-2026	District Headquarter (DHQ) Hospital, District Tando Muhammad Khan	SINDH	05-01-2026 to 07-01-2026	Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) Hospital, Tehsil Taunsa Sharif, District Dera Ghazi Khan (D.G.Khan)	PUNJAB
12-01-2026 to 14-01-2026	OGDC Community Hospital, Qadirpur, District Ghotki	SINDH	24-03-2026 to 26-03-2026	Rural Health Centre (RHC), Tehsil Domel, District Attock	PUNJAB
17-01-2026 to 19-01-2026	Rural Health Center (RHC) Maru Reti, District Ghotki	SINDH	31-03-2026 to 02-04-2026	Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) Hospital, District Gujjar Khan	PUNJAB
23-04-2026 to 25-04-2026	OGDC's Khewari Operational Area, District Khairpur	SINDH	07-04-2026 to 09-04-2026	Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) Hospital, Tehsil Sadiqabad, District Rahim Yar Khan (RYK)	PUNJAB
27-04-2026 to 29-04-2026	Civil Hospital, District Khairpur	SINDH	11-04-2026 to 13-04-2026	Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) Hospital, Jalalpur Pirwala, District Multan	PUNJAB
17-11-2025 to 19-11-2025	Rural Health Center (RHC), District Jhal Magsi	BALOCHISTAN	05-05-2026 to 07-05-2026	Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) Hospital, District Sargodha	PUNJAB
24-11-2025 to 26-11-2025	District Headquarter (DHQ) Hospital, District Dera Bugti	BALOCHISTAN	12-05-2026 to 14-05-2026	District Headquarter (DHQ) Hospital, District JHELUM	PUNJAB
24-01-2026 to 26-01-2026	District Headquarter (DHQ) Hospital, District Khuzdar	BALOCHISTAN	19-05-2026 to 21-05-2026	OGDC's Toot Oil Field, District Attock	PUNJAB
29-01-2026 to 31-01-2026	District Headquarter (DHQ) Hospital, District Kharan	BALOCHISTAN	16-06-2026 to 18-06-2026	OGDC's Rajian Oil Field, Mulhal Mughlan , District Chakwal	PUNJAB
03-02-2026 to 05-02-2026	District Headquarter (DHQ) Hospital, District Sohbat Pur	BALOCHISTAN	23-06-2026 to 25-06-2026	OGDC's Soghri Oil Field, Pind Sultani District Attock	PUNJAB
09-02-2026 to 11-02-2026	Nokhandi / Chagai	BALOCHISTAN	30-06-2026 to 02-07-2026	OGDC's Fimkasar Oil Field, Fimkasar, District Chakwal	PUNJAB
09-12-2025 to 11-12-2025	District Headquarter (DHQ) Hospital, F.R.Lakki Marwat	KPK			

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